

Big Sandy Crayfish and Guyandotte River Crayfish Listing Determination and Peer Review

About the Listing Decision

On April 7, 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) published a final rule to list the Big Sandy crayfish (*Cambarus callainus*) as a threatened species and to list the Guyandotte River crayfish (*C. veteranus*) as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended.

About the Peer Review Process

Peer Review Timeline: April 2015 to May 2015

Process:

- Per our 1994 Peer Review policy, we chose independent peer reviewers and invited comment letters from them.
- We solicited peer review from seven knowledgeable individuals with expertise in the field of astacology (the study of crayfishes) and stream ecology.
- The peer reviewers were requested to review the proposed rule, published in the *Federal Register* on April 7, 2015, to list both the Big Sandy crayfish and the Guyandotte River crayfish as endangered species under the Act.
- Peer reviewers were asked: to comment specifically on the quality of information and analyses used or relied on in the Report; to identify oversights, omissions, and inconsistencies; to provide advice on reasonableness of judgments made from the scientific evidence; to ensure that scientific uncertainties were clearly identified and characterized, and that potential implications of uncertainties for the technical conclusions drawn were clear; and to provide advice on the overall strengths and limitations of the scientific data used in the document.

Peer reviewers were selected based on the following criteria:

- **Expertise:** Reviewers were experts in the ecology of the two crayfish species, in the stressors affecting these species, or in applicable fields.
- **Independence:** The reviewers were not employed by the Service. Academic and consulting scientists were sufficiently independent from the Service, as appropriate.
- **Objectivity:** Reviewers were expected to be objective, open-minded, and thoughtful.
- **Advocacy:** Reviewers were not known or recognized for an affiliation with an advocacy position regarding the protection of this species.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Reviewers did not have any financial or other interest that conflicted with or impaired their objectivity.

About Public Participation

- The Service invited public review and comment on the proposed rule to list the Big Sandy crayfish and the Guyandotte River crayfish as endangered species (April 7, 2015 to June 8, 2015) and reopened the public comment period for an additional 30-day period (December 15, 2015 to January 14, 2016).
- The Service posted a notice on its website of the final rule, which included a summary of the comments provided by the peer reviewers and the public.

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